



# SNE Advancing the Practice of Food Stamp Nutrition Education Evaluation: Art and Science

---

## Session 3-How Program Reporting Systems Can Support Evaluation

Invited Discussant  
Ellen Taylor-Powell, Ph.D.  
Evaluation Specialist  
University of Wisconsin-Extension

July 31, 2003  
Philadelphia, PA



# So, what have I been hearing?

---

- Importance of and commitment to partnering and collaboration
- This is a journey
- Important to use existing resources, experience, systems and instruments
- Be grounded in theory and best practices
- Keep it simple, practical, nonburdensome
- Process is important and needs to link to outcomes
- Need valid and reliable instruments
- Many challenges and opportunities



# Challenges

---

- Multiple stakeholders
- Program variability
- Broad, complex problems
- Duration and intensity of programs
- Methodological limitations
- Rigor vs. practicalities
- Attribution



# Opportunities

---

- Biggest nutrition program in the world
- Interested and committed partners
- Collaboration with research community, universities (labs, students)
- “Tell your story” while improving practice



# How does reporting support evaluation?

---

Reporting is actually the final phase of evaluation: communicating; “telling your story”; informing decision making

- Allows clients voices to be heard
- Creates visibility
- Provides way to share lessons learned, good practices
- Fosters accountability and program improvement

USE: Internal and external uses



# Internal VALUE

---

Forces us to focus - clarify purpose;  
prioritize

Builds understanding. Just implementing  
outcome reporting has value; content of  
work shifts to outcome

Informs, trains, motivates staff

Allows for making comparisons, identifying  
trends

Supports planning and budgeting

Provides recognition – visibility

Supports culture of a learning organization



# External VALUE

---

- Shows we are accountable to funders, public, communities
- Useful for promotion, marketing, fundraising
- Attracts volunteers, partners, clients
- Leveraging resources
- Sharing; dissemination




# Top 10 Evaluation List

---

1. Strong leadership
2. Common language
3. Engaged stakeholders: funders, partners, staff, clients
4. Showcase use; learning and internal value
5. Start with “What” – what do you want to know (inputs, outputs, outcomes); then go to the “How” (methods)
  - Explore innovative, creative methods



- 
- 
6. Integrate as everyone's responsibility – an evaluation culture
  7. Build into incentive and reward system
  8. Streamline data collection system
  9. Provide excellent training and technical assistance
  10. Invest: research studies; time; analytical expertise; collaboration